

## IV. City of Villages Strategy

### A. Overview

What is a village? The term “village” is defined in the strategy as the mixed-use heart of a community where residential, commercial, employment, and civic uses are all present and integrated. No two villages are alike. They are unique to the community in which they are located. A high quality of urban design will achieve the maximum possible integration with the surrounding community fabric and the transit system. Villages are pedestrian-friendly and have inviting streets and public spaces for community events. These spaces could include public parks or plazas, community meeting spaces, outdoor gathering spaces for residents and visitors, passive or active open space areas that contain desirable landscape and streetscape design amenities, or attractive outdoor dining and market activities. They offer a variety of housing types and rents/prices. Villages will be linked citywide by excellent transit service integrated into a regional transit system and will be required to incorporate an attractive, efficient, and accessible pedestrian circulation system. They often focus on public facilities like schools, ~~parks~~ libraries, and police services to meet community needs. Villages often have pedestrian scaled and accessible centers with diverse shops serving local daily needs.



The City of Villages strategy draws upon the strengths of San Diego’s natural environment, neighborhoods, commercial centers, institutions, and employment centers. The strategy focuses on the long-term economic, environmental, and social health of the City and its many communities. It is a strategy for each neighborhood to consciously determine where and how new growth should occur, and requires that new public facilities be in place as growth occurs. It builds upon existing neighborhoods while retaining their unique character by intensifying and enhancing their community centers. The strategy seeks to target growth in village areas, but is not linked to a particular rate of growth.

If current land development trends and policies continue and new development is not targeted into villages, auto-dependent activity centers and residential projects would likely remain the City’s dominant form of development. As a result, we may also see larger household sizes as families double up in homes due to rising housing costs and a diminishing supply of housing units. Our transportation system would consist of an increasingly congested road and highway system due to regional sprawl and a limited transit, bicycle, and pedestrian network.

The City of Villages strategy as described in this document consists of three components: the City of Villages policies, the City of Villages map, and the Action Plan which is contained fully in a separate document.

## *B. The City of Villages Policies*

The City of Villages strategy represents a comprehensive approach to guiding future development. The policies have been separated into categories for purposes of clarity, but they are closely interrelated.



### *1. Urban Form*

San Diego is one of few major metropolitan areas built upon and around a canyon system. The City's urban form is loosely based upon a naturally connected system of open space, characterized by valleys, canyons and mesas. These natural features also define the boundaries and gateways into the City's distinct neighborhoods. As San Diego grows, its urban form must increasingly respect the existing natural template, provide stronger linkages between communities, and create diverse village centers.

Key policies for urban form include:

#### **Respect the Natural Base**

- Allow the natural environment to define the City's form.
- Ensure that the natural form of the City (topography, river valleys, coastal edges, hillsides and promontories) is legible from crossing points in the circulation system, and distinguished with appropriate landmarks.
- Define neighborhood and community edges by either natural open space or urban enhancements (streetscape improvements, public art, landscape and architectural themes) to celebrate gateways and entrances.
- Preserve distinctive neighborhood character to ensure that buildings and landscapes reflect the endemic natural environment of each community.
- Protect urban canyons, significant hillsides and ridge lines.
- Encourage rural and open space preservation throughout the San Diego region
- Ensure the protection of other community open spaces that have been designated in community plans for long-term open space use primarily because of their value in protecting landforms; providing buffers within and between communities or potentially incompatible land uses; providing visually appealing opens spaces; and protecting habitat and biological systems of community importance that are not otherwise included in the (MSCP) Open Space category.

### Create Diverse Village Centers

- Focus more intense commercial and residential development in new or redeveloped mixed-use village centers in a manner that is pedestrian-oriented and preserves the vast majority of single-family neighborhoods.
- Design village centers, public facilities, and other new developments to be integrated into existing neighborhoods through more pedestrian-friendly site grading, building orientation and design, and the provision of multiple pedestrian access points, while respecting the existing community character.
- Provide the focus for neighborhood identity by designing village centers as focal points for public gatherings through public spaces (e.g. plazas, public art spaces, streetscape, transit centers, urban trail heads, parks, and pocket parks) and publicly oriented buildings (civic buildings and monuments, public facilities and services, social services, and retail centers).
- Develop and apply building design guidelines and regulations that create diversity rather than homogeneity and improve the quality of infill development.
- Preserve and create community landmarks.



## 2. Neighborhood Quality

As San Diegans, we value the distinctive character, safety and security, diversity, and sense of community in the City's many neighborhoods. Many of our older communities are loved for their architectural style, mix of uses, tree-lined streets and distinctive shopping districts. Others are drawn to newer suburban locations due to their excellent schools and public facilities, and new home choices. The City's strategy must preserve the best qualities of our neighborhoods, improve elements that do not function well, and provide for the needs of future generations. Neighborhood and urban centers will contain various mixes of commercial, employment, and housing uses. Centers will also include public gathering spaces, civic or educational uses, walkable, tree-lined streets, and opportunities for arts and culture. Historic resources will be addressed in a comprehensive manner and, where present, will be incorporated into many of the village centers.



Key policies to preserve and enhance neighborhood quality include:

### **Celebrate Public Spaces**

- Include significant public spaces in village developments and ensure that the design of these spaces accommodates pedestrians and builds upon the unique qualities of the City's diverse populations.
- Develop partnerships with neighborhoods in the site selection, planning, design, and building of public facilities, including parks and schools, to ensure they invite community use and function as centers for the community.
- Maximize the opportunities for community-oriented public spaces through public-private partnerships.

### **Provide Accessible and Integrated Parks**

- Develop a citywide park master plan to address shortfalls and provide remedies.
- Develop alternative methods of providing parks and recreational areas to meet the needs of urban and built-out communities, recognizing available land constraints and seizing opportunities for the creation of more accessible parks and the integration of public space and recreation. Some examples include additional or enhanced structures within park and recreational areas, public plazas, pocket parks, urban trails, linear parks, and joint use facilities.

### **Promote Safety and Security**

- Promote police/neighborhood partnerships and problem solving.
- Reduce the incidence and fear of crime through implementation of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) concepts and measures in the built environment, including:
  - ◇ Surveillance – use open structures, walkways, streets, and other spaces to enhance visibility and increase the detection of intruders; measures also include the use of exterior lighting, and windows and doors facing the street
  - ◇ Access Control – use security measures to create a perception of risk to offenders and deny them easy access to facilities; provide safe paths and common areas
  - ◇ Territoriality – delineate private and semi-private spaces to express ownership and control of the environment; create public spaces that are beautiful and meet the needs of the people living in the neighborhood
  - ◇ Maintenance – take care of properties to help maintain the effectiveness of the measures employed for surveillance, access control, and territoriality
- Balance the needs of emergency vehicles with everyday traffic concerns such as vehicle speeding and pedestrian safety through street design.

### **Increase Pedestrian, Bicycle and Transit Opportunities**

- Transit, sidewalks, pathways, and crosswalks should ensure the mobility of all users by accommodating the needs of people regardless of age or ability.
- Promote streetscape, bicycle facilities, urban trails, paths and pedestrian connection projects, and retrofits to develop or increase the pedestrian- and bicycle-orientation of each neighborhood and the City as a whole.
- Promote an interconnected street network, which includes pedestrian and bicycle access, where topography and landform permits. Private streets and driveway aisles within village developments should also be designed in this matter.
- Facilitate the planting and maintenance of street trees and median landscaping.
- Design and locate neighborhood and community commercial uses to be accessible and convenient by foot, bicycle, and transit, as well as by car.





- Implement transit priority measures on City streets and seek dedicated transit right-of-ways to increase the speed and attractiveness of the transit system.
- Promote an active streetscape to create a more attractive and safe pedestrian environment.



### **Promote Arts, Culture and History**

- Enrich individual neighborhoods and the City as a whole by integrating arts and culture into community life, supporting the region's diverse cultural assets, and highlighting San Diego as an international cultural destination.
- Ensure the preservation of a varied stock of historic and prehistoric resources representative of San Diego's historical record.
- Preserve historically significant resources that have been identified through local, state or federal historical designation processes.
- Incorporate historic resources as key components of mixed-use developments to enhance the development of existing and future villages, and to provide an important link with the past.
- Apply appropriate zoning and regulatory tools to preserve historic resources.
- Incorporate public art opportunities, including performing and visual arts, in capital improvement projects and private development projects.
- Support neighborhood festivals and celebrations.

### 3. *Public Facilities and Services*

The provision of adequate infrastructure and public facilities is the key component for the entire strategy. Public facilities like schools, parks, and police services must keep pace with population growth and development. In order to achieve progress in remedying existing public facilities shortfalls and to provide high quality public facilities and services in the future, new growth must have a more compact urban form, greater joint use efficiencies must be achieved, new sources of revenues must be secured, and facilities and services must be better tailored to meet the needs of diverse communities.

A framework for providing the needed facilities will occur through an update of the Public Facilities Element of the General Plan and preparation of expanded Community Facilities Elements in community plans. The Public Facilities Element will set forth a strategy for prioritizing public facilities needs on a citywide basis while Community Facilities Elements establish overall policy direction on the character, prioritization, and mix of needed facilities for each community. Community Facilities Elements will provide policy guidance for the development of Community Facilities Financing plans. The Facilities Financing plans will identify existing and future facilities needs in each community, and available funding sources that could be used to meet those needs. A wide range of community input would be required to determine which type of facilities best suit the needs of each community, taking into account unique neighborhood character and urban form.



When determining the phasing of new development and the preparation of public facilities plans, key policies to address include:

- Provide for the future population according to the fair share abilities of the City's communities to accommodate new residents commensurate with the public facilities to support them.
- Focus infrastructure investments in communities that have a demonstrated need for such resources.
- Take an active leadership role in state and local fiscal reform proposals that could benefit the City.
- Consider alternative methods of financing to provide public facilities (see Section V.C).
- Establish a consistent approach to evaluating and reporting the long-term fiscal impact of public policy decisions to ensure a sound fiscal base.
- Use citywide resources to ensure that community facilities, open space, and infrastructure improvements are provided concurrent with intensification.
- New development will contribute to public facilities commensurate with the level of impact.
- Design schools as community learning centers, recognize them as an integral part of our neighborhoods, and encourage equitable access to quality schools and other educational institutions.
- Promote the joint-use of facilities, including schools, parks, libraries, childcare facilities, and other public facilities and services.
- Focus efforts and resources on undergrounding utilities.
- Reduce travel demand and increase equitable access to lifelong education through greater use of information infrastructure.
- Establish service standards for public facilities and infrastructure that are flexible, but provide an equivalent level of service.
- Protect and enhance regional parks through planning and acquisition.
- Village development should assist in reducing the public facility shortfall.
- Encourage private investment to finance village projects.
- Service levels should be maintained as population growth occurs.





## 4. *Conservation and the Environment*

San Diego's beauty and character is in large part due to its unmatched natural resources. San Diego's mountains, beaches, bays, canyons, and other natural landforms define the City. Some of the most unique, and unfortunately threatened and endangered, plants and animals in the nation are concentrated in this region. Our future quality of life hinges on the protection of these natural resources to safeguard San Diego's beauty and biodiversity, and to ensure an adequate supply of resources such as energy and water for the future.



The City of San Diego is committed to protecting and restoring natural resources, preventing harm to the environment and human health, and promoting a sustainable future that meets short-term objectives without compromising San Diego's long-term needs. Environmental quality is a key to the City's quality of life and long-term economic prosperity. The City of San Diego's commitment to conservation and the environment shall guide future decision-making, policies, and programs.

### **Protecting Resources and Preventing Pollution**

- Conserve and restore natural and imported resources, such as energy, open space, wildlife, habitat, biodiversity, geographical features, soils, coastal features, watersheds, wetlands, waterways, and water quality and supply through the continuation and enhancement of existing programs and policies, and through the development of programs and policies which utilize proactive measures in addition to corrective actions.
- Conserve renewable and nonrenewable resources, such as natural materials, energy, and water through greater efficiency of use, reuse, use of recycled water, and recycling to reduce the City and region's reliance upon expansion of supply and importation.
- Protect environmental and public health by reducing or eliminating the use of hazardous and toxic materials by residences, businesses, and public agencies; and by taking actions to minimize the levels of pollutants entering the air, soil and water.
- Take an active leadership role in promoting rural and open space preservation throughout the region.

### **Encourage Efficient Land Development**

- Work toward the citywide development of sustainable, or "green" buildings that use renewable energy and conserve energy through design, location, construction, and operation while increasing the comfort, health, and safety of the people who live and work in them.

- Conserve and restore natural and imported resources, such as energy, land, wildlife, biodiversity, open space, soils, geographical features, air quality, and water quality and supply through efficient land use patterns.
- Increase landscaping and emphasize the use of deciduous trees and native plants to conserve energy, water, and reduce urban runoff.
- Incorporate urban heat island reduction measures into the appropriate site and street design guidelines, landscape standards, and building codes to reduce peak energy demand.

#### **Ensure Social Equity**

- Ensure that environmental impacts and costs of protecting the environment do not unfairly burden or omit any one geographic or socioeconomic sector of the City.

#### **Promote Environmental Education**

- Lead in the creation and sponsorship of environmental education opportunities in cooperation with schools, colleges, museums, and community groups so that individuals, organizations, and businesses become aware of and assume more responsibility for their own impacts on the environment.



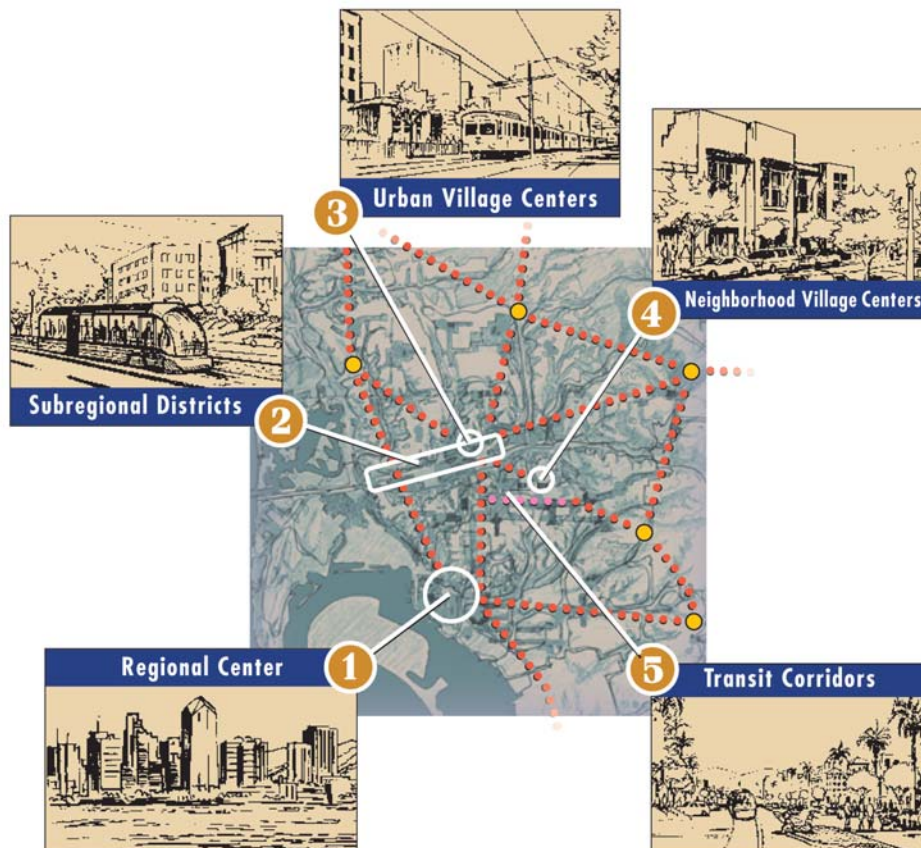
## 5. Mobility

The City of Villages strategy calls for a convenient, efficient, and attractive multi-modal transportation system that encourages trips to be made by pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit riders. This system should improve mobility for San Diegans by providing faster, competitive, even preferred, alternatives to the automobile for many trips in the region.

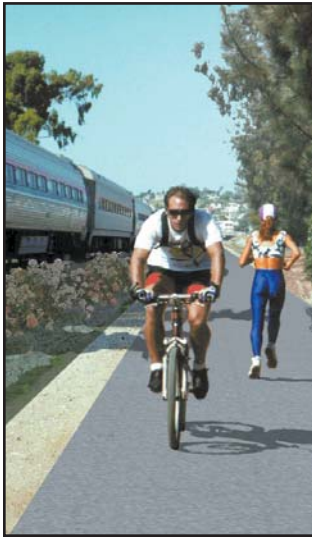


To realize this vision, transportation and land use planning must be closely linked. This includes retrofitting and redeveloping portions of existing neighborhoods and roadways and designing new streets and centers to fully integrate land use, circulation, and urban design. The goal is to maximize the ability of people to move about comfortably and efficiently by foot, bicycle and transit, and to reduce automobile dependence. Thoughtful land use planning may also reduce the need for vehicular travel, as goods and services would be conveniently located near homes and jobs.

For San Diegans to enjoy freedom of mobility in the future, dramatic improvements to our transit system and focused improvements to streets and highways need to be made. Future road improvements to enhance the connectivity of the transportation network will need to be balanced with goals of protecting neighborhood character and environmental resources.



While villages are intended to have a variety of uses and services that meet many of the daily needs of the people living and working within them, villages are not expected to be self-sufficient enclaves. San Diego's most dense neighborhoods, urban centers, and corridors will be linked to each other and to the region through high quality, rapid transit services designed in accordance with the "Transit First" strategy. The Transit First vision is the product of a market-based, strategic planning program undertaken by the Metropolitan Transit Development Board (MTDB). This vision is characterized by: a rich network of high-speed routes, ten-minute service frequencies, extensive use of transit priority measures, walkable community designs, stations integrated into neighborhoods, and customer focus in services and facilities. The goal is to create a world-class transit system that is competitive with the automobile. The strategy also seeks to improve walkability and bicycle-friendliness within the villages and the City as a whole.



SANDAG is incorporating the Transit First plan into the Regional Transit Vision, which is a part of the 2030 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). The RTP is the region's long-range blueprint for transportation improvements.

Key policies to implement this vision include:

#### **Link Land Use and Transportation**

- Integrate land use and transportation planning as part of a long-term strategy to improve mobility.
- Require transit-oriented development and urban design in village centers.
- Design and locate mixed-use centers, civic uses, and neighborhood and community commercial uses to be accessible by foot, bicycle, and transit, in addition to the car.
- Promote design accessibility for children, the elderly, and people with disabilities.

#### **Improvements to Streets and Highways**

- Promote pedestrian, bicycle and transit-friendly design of City streets.
- Provide capacity and operational improvements to streets and highways to minimize congestion with a focus on persons and goods, not just vehicles. Include desired improvements in the 2030 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) being prepared by SANDAG.

#### **Manage Parking Resources**

- Develop innovative regulations, and parking management programs and districts, that encourage shared parking and more efficient use of parking resources.
- Provide community parking facilities that serve multiple users.



### **Put Transit First**

- Support “Transit First” as a system that makes transit a viable mode of travel for many of the trips in the region and the first choice for many of these trips.
- Support incorporation of the Transit First system into the Regional Transit Vision for inclusion in the 2030 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). Use the Transit First strategy and the Regional Transit Vision as the basis for transit planning, development and land use coordination. (See fold out for the Strategic Framework Element City of Villages Map with Draft Regional Transit Vision.)
- Implement transit priority measures such as separate guide ways, dedicated lanes, and traffic signal prioritization on streets and highways to make transit travel times competitive with the automobile.
- Prioritize transit service investments in existing and planned villages.
- Pursue reauthorization of the current or an increased TransNet local sales tax that would help fund the Transit First system.
- Ensure that the design and location of transit stations and centers respect neighborhood character and enhance the users’ personal experience of each neighborhood.

### **Create Walkable Communities**

- Promote walkable, tree-lined streets.
- Promote an interconnected street/trail network and retrofit existing neighborhoods to enhance walkability and bicycling as well as distributing traffic.







## 6. *Housing Affordability*

Increased housing opportunities (in terms of amount of land, location, density, type, size, and cost) are needed to accommodate future population growth, changing demographics, and to enable the workforce to live near employment centers. The provision of affordable housing also assists the City of San Diego in meeting social equity and economic prosperity goals.

Key policy measures to ensure a variety of housing types and range of affordability options include:

- Provide a sufficient range of housing opportunities by facilitating the maintenance and development of an overall diversity of housing types and costs.
- Improve housing affordability throughout the City.
- Initiate public education efforts to help reduce opposition to affordable transitional and multifamily housing proposals.
- Concentrate future residential density increases in the Downtown area, Subregional Districts and Urban and Neighborhood Village Centers, as illustrated on the City of Villages map and refined by community plan updates and amendments. Future community plan updates shall include residential density minimums where there are no stated residential minimum densities in the current community plan.
- Establish policies to allow areas within the Subregional Districts to collocate employment and higher density residential uses and adopt design standards to mitigate land use conflicts.
- Aggressively pursue and secure funding and legislation at all governmental levels to increase housing affordability in San Diego.



## 7. *Economic Prosperity and Regionalism*

To address the shortage of available land used for employment, the land appropriate for future employment uses should be designated in key areas throughout the City, including recognizing underutilized land that could be redeveloped for employment uses. Subregional Districts and Urban Village Centers (further defined in Part C of this section) will play an important role in the City's economic prosperity strategies by providing the appropriately designated land and infrastructure needed to support business development and a variety of employment and housing opportunities.



Key strategies to increase economic prosperity include:

### **Use Employment Lands Efficiently**

- Increase the allowable intensity of employment uses in Subregional Districts and Urban Village Centers that will be better served by transit. This can be achieved by increasing the permitted floor area and lot coverage standards.
- Identify other underutilized employment lands that could also intensify where transit exists or is planned.
- Locate regional employment uses in the Downtown area or in Subregional Districts.
- Identify areas in Subregional Districts where collocation of employment and residential uses could occur.
- Concentrate commercial development in areas best able to support those uses such as urban and neighborhood centers and mixed-use corridors. Subregional Districts and Transit Corridors may also limit the amount of retail commercial in favor of industrial or residential uses.
- Identify commercial areas where industrial uses could be permitted without discretionary review.
- Make available underutilized City-owned land where transit exists or is planned and has the potential for use as employment land.
- Limit the redesignation of employment land except where it will mitigate existing land use conflicts, or when it meets specific criteria to be established with the adoption of the Economic Prosperity Element. These criteria should relate to the availability of land to meet the City's economic development goals, parcel characteristics, adjacency to transit, and urban design.

### **Increase Middle-Income Employment Opportunities**

- Preserve areas for middle-income employment uses including manufacturing, research and development, distribution, and wholesale trade by limiting or excluding multiple tenant office uses and corporate headquarters that do not have a research and development or manufacturing component.
- Identify additional areas for the location of middle-income uses.
- Encourage high technology business facilities in locations that are more broadly geographically distributed throughout the City.

### **Retain and Expand Business**

- Most of the region's economic growth comes from the expansion of existing businesses and from entrepreneurial innovation, rather than from attracting other businesses to the area. Establish land use policies and regulations that are sufficiently flexible to meet the needs of a mixed, diverse, and rapidly changing economy.
- Streamline development regulations to reduce discretionary review, increase predictability, and expedite processing for projects that meet regulations.
- Evaluate economic conditions on an ongoing basis and identify the industry clusters that are key to both the growth and stability of the local economy. The goal is to provide a diverse economic base, maintain environmental quality, and provide high quality employment opportunities.
- Develop business incentives that encourage reuse and infill for key employment clusters in existing urban areas.
- Continue and expand, where appropriate, Redevelopment Areas and Enterprise Zones.

### **Promote Education and Job Training**

- Provide equitable access to educational opportunities, which result in a highly qualified and productive labor force.
- Develop public/private partnerships and pursue local, state, and federal grants to provide high technology education and job training at all levels.



### **Lead Regional Collaboration**

- Assume an active leadership role in planning and implementing infrastructure investments on a collaborative regional basis.
- Collaborate with state and federal agencies to implement alternate investment policies that support growth in urban locations.
- Regional capital facilities that provide the most significant positive economic impact to the City will be targeted for investment. The highest priority should be given to infrastructure investments that are fundamental to our future needs and provide leverage for our competitive advantages.



### **Strengthen Border Relations**

- Continue to increase trade capabilities with Latin America in part by developing a comprehensive economic development strategy with Mexico.
- Increase coordination with Mexico to plan and implement mutually beneficial cross border facilities.
- Develop a unique and festive binational village adjacent to the international border combining employment, retail, entertainment, and cultural uses connected by a pedestrian bridge to a similar zone in Tijuana.



## 8. Equitable Development

Implementation of the City of Villages carries a risk of gentrification. The term gentrification has various definitions. The definition we have adopted here is “the process by which higher income households displace lower income residents of a neighborhood, changing the essential character and flavor of that neighborhood.”<sup>1</sup>

Gentrification is a process that is neither wholly good nor bad, and the negative aspects of gentrification can be minimized if equitable development is achieved. Equitable development is defined as “the creation and maintenance of economically and socially diverse communities that are stable over the long term, through means that generate a minimum of transition costs that fall unfairly on lower income residents.”<sup>2</sup> If carefully framed, gentrification can help meet the goal of equitable development by creating a greater income mix in a neighborhood and providing new economic opportunities. By improving the housing stock and job market in older urban neighborhoods, gentrification can also help fight urban sprawl by helping older neighborhoods successfully compete with the suburbs for investment dollars. Both public and private sector partners must act early in the revitalization process to promote equitable development and to ease or eliminate the adverse consequences of gentrification.





On a community-by-community basis, strategies may be adopted to achieve the following goals:

- Develop village plans with the involvement of a broad range of neighborhood, business, and planning groups.
- Strategically invest in public infrastructure and offer development incentives that are consistent with the neighborhood's vision.
- Build affordable housing to retain a diverse income mix in neighborhoods.
- Reduce overall market-wide housing pressures by increasing the supply of market-rate housing.
- Continue efforts to revitalize neighborhood-serving business areas.
- Recognize the important role that schools play in neighborhood life and look for opportunities to form closer partnerships among local schools, residents, neighborhood groups, and the City with the goal of improving public education.

The City of San Diego can take a leadership role in defining and implementing some of these strategies. Others require action by the private sector, other government agencies and community-based partners. In fact, many of the most successful programs have been initiated and implemented by the residents of affected areas. Neighborhood-specific action plans should expand upon and further define these general strategies based on the needs of individual neighborhoods, available resources and willing partners. These action plans will be adopted as a part of village master plans or other long-range plans as appropriate



1. Maureen Kennedy and Paul Leonard, *Dealing with Neighborhood Change: A Primer on Gentrification and Policy Changes*, (The Brookings Institution Center on Urban and Metropolitan Policy, April 2001), p. 5.
2. Kennedy and Leonard, p. 4.



*See the fold out for the entire Strategic Framework Element City of Villages Map with Draft Regional Transit Vision.*

## *C. The Strategic Framework Element City of Villages Map*

### *1. The Purpose of the Map*

The Strategic Framework Element City of Villages Map identifies opportunity areas for future village development and is intended to serve as a guide for future community plan amendments and updates. By identifying locations for compact, mixed-use development, the City has the opportunity to develop in a more efficient and environmentally sensitive pattern of development pursuant to our core values. Community planning groups, MTDB, development and planning professionals, and citizen subcommittee members assisted in the development of the village types and locations indicated on the map. The precise boundaries, specific mix of uses, specific density and intensity ranges, and the amount and definition of required public or civic space within proposed village areas will be determined through the community plan amendment process.

### *2. Village Types*

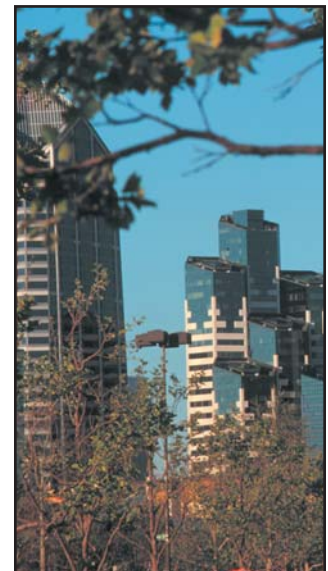
Although the term “village” is used as a unifying concept, specific types of villages were identified to further define the general development parameters of an area. These village types include both new target growth areas as well as areas already designated for growth in existing community plans which could redevelop with a village design. They loosely define associated land use characteristics and residential densities while identifying potential opportunity areas where further study should occur.

The village types include:

#### **Regional Center (Downtown)**

The Centre City community plan area has a unique role to play in the 21st century development of the San Diego region. Downtown has remained the administrative and legal center of San Diego County and it has recently reemerged as the most important cultural and entertainment center in the region. Development of the Gaslamp Quarter, San Diego Convention Center, and Horton Plaza has resulted in downtown becoming an increasingly important destination for visitors to this region. Downtown offers the most convenient and extensive transit connections and one of the most exciting pedestrian environments in the region.

The City of Villages strategy encourages the further intensification of Downtown to increase its role as a regional hub by maintaining and enhancing its role as the pre-eminent business center in this region and developing as a major urban residential center with the largest concentration of high density multifamily housing in the region.



### **Subregional Districts**

A Subregional District is a major employment and/or commercial district within the region containing corporate or multiple-use office, industrial, and retail uses with some adjacent multifamily residential uses. Existing Subregional Districts include the Mission Valley/Morena/Grantville and North University City areas. Emerging districts include Otay Mesa, Midway/Pacific Highway, Kearny Mesa, and Sorrento Mesa/Sorrento Valley.

The City of Villages strategy encourages further intensification of employment uses throughout these large areas. Where appropriate, the collocation of medium to high density residential uses with employment uses could occur. Subregional Districts also include more focused high density/intensity growth areas known as Urban Village Centers.

### **Urban Village Centers**

Urban Village Centers will have a cluster of more intensive employment, residential, regional and subregional commercial uses to maximize walk-





bility and support transit. The village center will contain public gathering spaces and civic uses. Urban Village Centers vary in size and could support medium to high density residential uses as specified on the City of Villages map. These densities will apply to that portion of the site designated for residential or mixed-use.

University Towne Center and the higher density development surrounding it are an example of an existing Urban Village Center.

### **Neighborhood Village Centers**

Neighborhood Village Centers will occur in most communities. They are neighborhood-oriented areas with local commercial, office, and multifamily residential buildings, including some buildings with office or residential over commercial. Neighborhood Village Centers will contain public gathering spaces and/or civic uses. Uses will be integrated to the maximum extent possible in order to encourage a pedestrian-oriented design and encourage transit ridership. Neighborhood Village Centers range in size from approximately three acres in the most urbanized portions of the City to more than 100 acres in vacant or redevelopable areas.

Residential density and commercial intensity will vary according to each center's size, location, surrounding community character, and availability of public facilities, particularly transit. Most villages will include a low-medium to medium-high density range in a variety of building types. These density ranges apply to portions of the site developed as residential or mixed-use.



The Uptown District in Hillcrest, at about 45 dwelling units per acre on the residential portion of the site, and downtown La Jolla are examples of existing Neighborhood Village Centers. The strategy recommends that many of the proposed Neighborhood Village Centers will be located on older underutilized shopping centers and strip malls.



### **Transit Corridors**

The City contains a significant number of commercial corridors in urbanized communities that offer reuse potential and provide important linkages between village centers. Some of these corridors are “Main Streets” in that they are lively and vital, pedestrian-friendly, and home to a rich variety of small businesses and restaurants. However, in some cases these corridors are unsightly commercial strip malls struggling to compete with more upscale centers. The revitalization of these corridors will be assisted through plan designations and zoning that permits a higher intensity of mixed-use development. The mix of uses could include some combination of residential over commercial development, employment uses, commercial uses, or higher density residential development. The applicable density ranges are medium to high density for residential uses.

In addition to providing valuable new housing, increased residential densities provide a built-in population base to support the local street level businesses. A high level of transit service and a variety of streetscape improvements will also characterize corridors.

### **Existing and Future Villages and Transit Corridors**

Existing and Future Villages and Transit Corridors are not currently proposed for intensification, but may have development capacity in their existing community plans which would allow them to develop more fully into villages and transit corridors. Increases in density and/or intensity could occur in these areas after 2020 due to a variety of factors such as availability of transit, development phasing, and availability of infrastructure. They are identified on the map for informational purposes only and were not included in the environmental analysis.



### 3. *Village Locations*

Potential village sites identified on the City of Villages Map are intended to leverage growth to implement quality of life goals and amenities identified by the public. These goals and amenities include safe public parks and plazas, walkable neighborhoods, world-class transit, local employment, vital business areas or “Main Streets,” and opportunities for senior and entry-level housing. Another citywide goal is to provide an equitable approach to distributing growth throughout the City.

Input from community planning groups was a key factor in determining village locations. In addition, the following factors were considered when determining the locations of the villages and corridors, and could be used as criteria for selecting future villages:

- Existing village-like and/or mixed-use areas that could benefit from revitalization.
- Sites already identified by the existing community plan as community or mixed-use centers that may have adjacent existing or planned residential development to support a village.
- Town or community centers in newer communities that could be enhanced or expanded.
- Sites that are not designated as open space or single-family residential in the community plan.
- Locations identified through public input.
- Vacant or underutilized land which could be made available in the next 20 years for other types of uses.
- Sites with adequate access or transit possibilities.
- Areas that can be developed consistent with existing development and market trends.
- Sites without significant topographic, environmental, or other physical constraints.
- Areas with advantageous locations with regard to views and natural features.
- Sites that can accommodate development which is compatible with the character of existing surrounding development with regard to use, design, bulk and scale.



## 4. Citywide Land Uses



Specific land uses and the mix of land uses within a village will be determined as community plans are amended or updated and more detailed master plans and standards develop. General assumptions were developed to illustrate the potential mix and types of uses which could occur as additional growth in an area. These assumptions were prepared as a technical basis for the Environmental Impact Report analysis and are not intended to mandate or restrict the mix of uses in any specific area. They were also utilized as the basis of the “2020 Housing Goals by Community Plan” which is part of the City of Villages Implementation Monitoring Plan in the Action Plan.

A realistic growth scenario was developed assuming that only some of the village sites will actually redevelop within the next 20 years. This scenario considered the viability of existing on-site development, the rate and phasing of redevelopment, and other factors that could limit the development potential of an area. The increased development potential represented by the City of Villages map is an additional 17,000 to 37,000 residential units above what has been estimated under existing community plans and policies for 2020 (approximately 108,840 units based on the 2000 Census).

In 1995, SANDAG forecasted that there would be 31,000 total employment acres in 2020 consisting of the following types.

Office . . . . .	2,200 acres
Retail Commercial . . . . .	13,500 acres
Industrial . . . . .	15,500 acres

In 2020, the City of Villages strategy maintains our current jobs/housing ratio of 1.4 (number of jobs to housing units). A total of 838,000 jobs or 50.5% of the region's jobs are planned to occur within the City of San Diego. Although employment growth will occur in almost all areas of the City, new employment associated with the City of Villages strategy is primarily planned for Downtown and the Subregional Districts, with some incremental growth planned to occur in the Neighborhood Village Centers.

Although the strategy provides for additional employment and housing beyond existing community plans and policies, the actual rate at which San Diego grows any given year will be determined by factors such as employment growth, birth rates, the national economy, and immigration policy. Whether SANDAG growth projections are realized by the year 2010, 2020, or 2050, the City of Villages strategy should be equally effective in preserving, and hopefully improving, San Diego's quality of life.